Ethnic and Gender Differences in Emotional Ideology, Experience, and Expression

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Abstract

How universal are men and women's attitudes toward the expression of emotion? How similar are the emotions that men and women from various ethnic groups experience and express in their close love relationships? In this study, 144 men and 307 women of European, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, and Japanese ancestry were asked about their ideologies as to how people *ought* to deal with strong emotions in close relationships, how often they themselves *felt* a variety of emotions, and how they *dealt* with such feelings in close relationships. Finally, they were asked how satisfied they were with their close relationships. Men and women appeared to possess different emotional ideologies. Women tended to favor direct expression of emotion; men to favor emotional management. People of Chinese, European, Filipino, Hawaiian, and Japanese ancestry also possessed different ideologies as to how people ought to deal with strong emotions in intimate relationships.

Keywords: *emotion; ethnic differences; gender differences; love*

Do men and women possess different philosophies as to how people *ought* to deal with positive and negative emotions in close relationships? Are there crucial differences in the way people from a variety of ethnic groups *feel* and in their willingness to *express* their emotions? Does the way people deal with their emotions affect their satisfaction with their close relationships? This study was designed to find out.

The first step was to compile a list of representative emotions.

A Taxonomy of Emotions

Many psychologists have attempted to provide a taxonomy of the "basic emotions." Researchers generally have little trouble classifying emotions as positive versus negative in feeling tone (See Carlson & Hatfield, 1992; Fischer, Shaver, & Carnochan, 1990; Frijda, 1986; Plutchik & Kellerman, 1983; or Zajonc, 1980.) What theorists *do* disagree about is

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just how many specific emotions there are and just what those emotions are. Theorists have proposed an array of taxonomies (beginning with Descartes, 1967, and Spinoza, 1963; continuing through Darwin, 1872; on to Fischer, Shaver, & Carnochan, 1990.) In fact, some theorists (such as Averill, 1982, and Kemper, 1978) argue that emotions are "social constructions." Thus, there could be an indeterminate number of emotions. In designing this research, we finally settled on a taxonomy proposed by Sprecher (1985), who compiled a list of 15 "folk" emotions that have been found to be important to a variety of ethnic groups in love relationships—the domain of this paper. These were:

Positive Emotions: joy, love, and sexual excitement.

Negative Emotions: anger, anxiety, depression, fear, frustration, grief, guilt/shame, hate, hurt, jealousy, loneliness, and resentment.

How might one expect men and women from various ethnic groups to differ in their philosophies? How often do men and women from various ethnic groups experience and express such common emotions in their close relationships?

A. Ethnic Group Differences

Since William James inaugurated the first psychology laboratory at Harvard, social scientists have attempted to formulate universal laws of social cognition, emotion, and behavior. Cultural critics point out, however, that until very recently, social psychology has been "made in America" (Markus, 2004). Theories, conceived by Western psychologists, were generally tested in the West with Western participants, and disseminated in Western scientific publications. (The Westerncentric bias has been so pervasive that, as the old joke goes, "even the rats were white.") In the past, when criticized for provincialism, scientists often argued that they were attempting to discover universal principles that transcend time and place. Ergo: it did not really matter whether studies were run in, say, Normal, Illinois, or Katmandu. Cognition is cognition is cognition . . .

Recently, cultural and cross-cultural researchers have criticized this assumption (Howitt & Owusu-Bempah, 1994; Marsella, 1998; Triandis, 1999.) They argue that cultural differences may have a profound impact on the way people conceptualize the

world, the meaning they ascribe to events, and how they react to common life events. Cultural researchers have amassed considerable evidence to document the validity of this critique (see Adams, Anderson, & Adonu, 2004; Cohen, 2001; Nisbett, 2003; Stephan & Stephan, 2003; Tsai & Levenson, 1997).

There is considerable debate as to whether various ethnic groups differ in the emotions they feel and express in close relationships. Many theorists assume that all humans feel the same basic emotions. From Darwin on, scientists have assumed that there is a continuum of expression from lower animals to humankind (see Lutz & White, 1986; and Scherer, 1979.) For example, Rosenblatt, Walsh, and Jackson (1976), observed:

> At least in dim outline, the emotional responses of people in almost any culture resemble those of people in almost any other (p. xx).

Studies of preliterate and literate cultures suggest that people probably do feel the same basic emotions and express them, at least facially, in much the same way (see Easton, 1985; Ekman, 1982; Izard, 1972; and Rapson, 1980).

Other theorists argue, however, that there are profound ethnic group differences in what people feel. They contend that different ethnic groups possess genetic, structural, or hormonal differences that influence the frequency and intensity of their emotional experience. Still others argue that diverse cultural values powerfully shape people's tendency to experience or display strong emotions (see Boucher & Brandt, 1981; Brandt & Boucher, 1986; Church, 1986; Frijda, 1986; Lutz & White, 1986; Marsella, 1981; Matsumoto, 1990; and Simmons, von Kholke, & Shimizu, 1986.)

Many theorists have speculated about the nature of these differences. Cultural theorists, for example, point out that the world's cultures differ profoundly in the extent to which they emphasize individualism or collectivism (although some cross-cultural researchers focus on related concepts: independence or interdependence, modernism or traditionalism, urbanism or ruralism, affluence or poverty, or a family versus non-family orientation). Individualistic cultures such as the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada, and the countries of Northern and Western Europe tend to focus on personal goals. Collectivist cultures such as China, many African and Latin American nations, Greece, southern Italy, and the Pacific Islands, on the other hand, press their members to

subordinate personal interests to those of the group (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). Triandis and his colleagues point out that in individualistic cultures, young people are allowed to "do their own thing"; in collectivist cultures, the group comes first.

In recent years, cultural researchers have begun to test these provocative hypotheses. This paper will explore these questions.

Hypothesis 1 proposes that members of the various ethnic groups will differ in how they think people *ought* to deal with strong emotions in close relationships.

Hypothesis 2 proposes that members of the various ethnic groups will differ little in the emotions—be they positive or negative—people *actually feel* in their close relationships.

Hypothesis 3 proposes that members of the various ethnic groups will differ substantially in how people *express* their emotions—be they positive or negative—in close relationships.

Hypothesis 4 proposes that possible differences in the way men and women in various ethnic groups deal with their emotions (expressing versus not expressing them) will have little (or no) impact upon relationship satisfaction. So many factors have been found to influence relationship satisfaction (see Ickes, 1984), that we expert to find only the weakest of correlations (if any) between cultural style and relationship satisfaction. (These analyses were conducted only for the readers' interest. A complete test of this hypothesis would obviously require a study in and of itself.)

B. Gender Differences

A variety of theorists have proposed that men and women generally differ in the types of emotion they experience in their close love relationships, the intensity of those emotions, and how readily they express those emotions. They have suggested five reasons for those gender differences:

1. *Perhaps men consider close relationships to be less important than do women.*

According to cultural stereotypes, women love and men work. This stereotype has been proffered by a wide array of psychologists and sociologists (Tavris, 1993). Early

feminists also contended that love is more important for women than for men. Firestone (1983), for example, observed:

> That women live for love and men live for work is a truism . . . Men were thinking, writing, and creating, because women were pouring their energies into those men; women . . . are preoccupied with love (pp. 126-127).

Dinnerstein (1977) observed:

> It has often been pointed out that women depend lopsidedly on love for emotional fulfillment because they are barred from absorbing activity in the public domain. This is true. But it is also true that men can depend lopsidedly on participation in the public domain because they are stymied by love (p. 70).

According to this logic, we might expect women to be more concerned with a relationship's up-and-downs, and thus react more emotionally to such events . . . while men would react more emotionally to the events in their work lives.

2. *When men and women describe their love relationships, they may be describing different events.*

Sprecher (1985) argues that "his marriage" and "her marriage" may be very different entities. The women's role might be intrinsically more rewarding *and* more frustrating than is the man's role.

3. Perhaps men are simply generally less emotional than are women.

In all societies, people have very definite ideas about how men versus women should think, feel, and behave (see Hyde, 2007; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974.) Women are stereotyped as the emotional sex (Brody & Hall, 2000; Broverman, et al, 1972; Plant, Hyde, Keltner, & Devine, 2000). This stereotype appears to exist in most cultures (Fischer & Manstead, 2000). For example, Broverman and her colleagues (1972) found that men and women—of widely varying ages, religions, and educational levels—perceive men to be the rational, competent, and assertive sex. They perceive women to be warm and emotionally expressive. Plant, et al., (2000) found that awe, disgust, distress, embarrassment, fear, guilt, happiness, love, sadness, shame, shyness, surprise, and sympathy were considered to be "feminine emotions." Only anger, contempt and pride were thought to be "masculine emotions."

A number of researchers, using self-report measures, have found gender differences in the intensity of emotional experience (Brody & Hall, 2000; Diener, Sandvik, & Pavot, 1991; Fujita, Diener, & Sandvik, 1991.)

When we examine the scientific evidence, however, it appears that many assumed gender differences exist more in fantasy than in fact (Unger & Siiter, 1974; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Hyde, 2007.) In one study, for example, Kring and Gordon (1998) showed undergraduates film clips designed to provoke happiness, sadness, or fear. Men and women did not differ in self-reports of how emotional they felt. They did differ, however, in facial expression (women displaying more) and skin conductance (men reacting more.) (Similar results were found by Hall, 1984).

4. Men and women may vary in how aware, or how honest they are willing to be, about what they feel.

"Display rules" are a culture's rules for what emotions may (or may not) be expressed (displayed.) In most cultures, most people consider it to be more acceptable for women to display emotion than for men to do so (Pleck & Sawyer, 1974). There is also evidence that in many cultures women are more comfortable displaying their feelings than are men (Hyde, 2007). In conversation, for example, girls and women use more emotion words and talk more about emotion than do boys and men (Brody & Hall, 2000; Goldschmidt & Weller, 2000).

Some have suggested that men may try to suppress their emotions so they will not appear to be "weak," even to themselves. Or perhaps men are merely reluctant to admit, even on an anonymous questionnaire, how emotional they really are.

5. Men may be conflict avoiding: women conflict confronting.

There is considerable evidence that men and women may react very differently in their closest relationships in times of conflict (Peplau, 1983). In America, men generally have the most power; they can often afford to act with the quiet confidence that, in the end, things will go their way. Women often have to develop a wide variety of techniques for gaining influence. Kelly and his colleagues (1978) studied young American couples' stereotypes as to how men and women generally behave during conflicts and their reports as to how they and their mates actually did behave during such conflicts. The stereotypes and reports of typical strategies were much the same: Women were expected to (and

reported) crying and sulking and then criticizing their husbands for lack of consideration of their feelings and for insensitivity to their feelings and insensitivity to his effect on her. Men were expected to (and reported) getting angry, rejecting their wife's tears, calling for a more logical and less emotional approach to problems, and giving reasons for delaying the discussion. Kelley and his colleagues concluded that men are indeed conflict-avoidant; they find it upsetting to deal with emotional problems. Women are conflict-confronting; they are frustrated by men's avoidance and ask that the problem and the feelings associated with it be confronted (see Canli, Desmond, Zhao, & Gabriell, 2002; Christensen & Heavey, 1990; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Gottman & Levenson, 1988; Kiecolt-Glaser, 1998; Notarius & Johnson, 1982; Schaap, 1982; for similar results.)

Rausch, Barry, and Hertel (1974) found that in role-play situations, husbands tried to resolve conflict or restore harmony; wives appealed to fairness and guilt or were cold and rejecting. The researchers speculated that: "women, as a low power group, may learn a diplomacy of psychological pressure to influence male partners' behavior" (p. 153).

On the basis of the preceding arguments, we proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5 proposes that men and women will differ in how they think people *ought* to deal with strong emotions in close love relationships.

Hypothesis 6 proposes that men and women will differ in the emotions—positive and negative—that they *experience* and *express* in close relationships.

Hypothesis 7 proposes that possible gender differences in the way people experience and express their emotions will have little (or no) impact upon relationship satisfaction. We expect members of various ethnic groups to be equally satisfied with their relationships. (These analyses were conducted only for the readers' interest. A complete test of this hypothesis would obviously require a study in and of itself.)

Of course this study can only *begin* to explore these complex questions. The best one can hope for is merely to get some hints as to any ethnic and gender differences that might exist, so that more sophisticated studies—that assess emotional experience and expression objectively—can be conducted. This study is a necessary first step, however.

Method

Participants

Researchers who wish to use scales standardized on an English-speaking population face the dilemma of whether to interview an English-speaking multi-cultural population (thereby losing the distinctness of geographically separate groups) or to translate the scales into a variety of languages and interview native language speaking cultural groups (thereby losing linguistic comparability.) This study surveyed an English speaking multi-cultural society—Hawaii. (See Easton, 1985, for a discussion of the pros and cons of this decision. Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006; Heine & Norenzayan, 2006, provide a discussion of the complex issues involved in cultural group selection and choice of language.)

The sample consisted of 144 men and 307 women from the University of Hawaii's Manoa, Leeward, and Windward campuses. Respondents' average age was 23; they ranged in age from 17-52. As is typical of Hawaii's multicultural population, respondents came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. (The way one chooses to label ethnic groups is, of course, controversial. We consulted with Dr. Richard Brislin, at the East-West Center, Honolulu, HI, in order to be sure we utilized those ethnic group labels preferred by Hawaiians, themselves.) Participants identified their ancestry as European (30.1%), Chinese (7.1%), Filipino (15.0%), Hawaiian (5.8%), and Japanese (25.4%). Groups too small in number to be included in the sample were Blacks (1.3%), Koreans (.9%), Samoans (.4%), South Asians (.2%), and people of mixed ethnicity (13.6%).

Participants also came from an array of religious groups. These were Catholic (42.4%), Protestant (15.6%), Buddhist (6.5%), Jewish (.4%), Mormon (2.0%), Other (20.8%), and None (12.3%). They also varied greatly in educational background: 4% had completed the eighth grade, 39.6% had completed high school; 3.6% had additional vocational/technical training; 55.5% had completed at least one year of college; and 1.9% had received an M.A. or other advanced degree.

Dating and marital status: In the original sample, 6% of men and women were not even casually dating. (These people were discarded from the sample.) In the final sample,

57% of the participants were dating, 9.3% were living together, 6.2% were engaged, 22.0% were married, and 5.0% indicated their status as "other."

Participants were members of a Psychology 101 subject pool and were awarded one class credit for participating.

Measures

The questionnaire included measures of the following variables:

1. ***Demographic Items:*** Participants' age, education, religion, and ethnic background were assessed. In addition, people were asked where they, their parents, and their grandparents had been born. On the basis of this information, we calculated an acculturation score. This was done in the following way: a person born in the United States received three points. For each parent born in the U. S., the person received two additional points; for each grandparent, one point. The highest acculturation a person could receive was 11. Ethnic groups varied in how recently their families had come to Hawaii and the United States. The most acculturated groups were the Blacks (M = 10.33) and (naturally) Hawaiians (M = 9.46.) The next immigrants were the Europeans (M = 9.03), Japanese (M = 7.99), and Chinese (M = 6.06). Last to arrive were the Filipinos (M = 2.99) and all others (M = 6.34).

2. ***Ideology:*** Our first step was to determine whether or not the various ethnic groups differed in their beliefs as to how people *ought* to deal with strong emotions in close relationships. Participants were asked to complete two measures. (These scales were placed in the last section of the questionnaire, to insure that a reminder of cultural norms would not influence participants' reports of their own feelings and behavior.)

a. *Honesty versus Management of Emotions.* Scale #1 was designed to assess whether participants believed honest expression or emotional management was most appropriate in close relationships. (We would like to point out that when we speak of "honesty" versus "management" of feelings, we are not assuming one strategy is better than the other. In all cultures, the "honest" expression of emotion, for example, may sometimes be viewed with admiration; at other times it may seem rude, obscenely demonstrative, insensitive, immature, unsubtle, dangerous, or simply inappropriate.)

Scale #1 was constructed in the following way: Researchers contacted students of European, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, and Japanese ancestry and, with their help, assembled a list of 29 cultural truisms—truisms that either advocated honest expression of emotion (i.e., "Honesty is the best policy,") or argued that, in order to protect oneself, one's partner, or the relationship, one should shade the truth (i.e., "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.")

Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with each of these 29 statements on a five point scale, ranging from (5) "Agree completely," to (1) "Disagree completely.") A total score was calculated by summing the scores for the *eight* items advocating honesty, weighting that total by 2.63, and subtracting the scores for the *21* items advocating emotional control. (In order allow us allow us to calculate a single score for "How honest should one be?" we multiplied the means for the eight items advocating honesty items by 2.63 (which gave the items a weight of 21.04) and subtracted the means for the 21 items advocating control.) The higher the score, the more honest the participants felt one ought to be in close relationships. (Possible scores ranged from +84 to -84.)

b. *A Belief that One Should Exaggerate, Be Honest, or Play-Down Emotions.*

Scale #2 was designed not just to assess whether a group believed in emotional management, but what kind of management they advocated.

Logically, one could possess almost any set of beliefs as to the proper way to deal with strong emotions. One might believe in a passionate life and assume that one ought to exaggerate one's feelings—positive and negative. One might believe that one ought to try to precisely describe one's feelings; or that one ought to accentuate positive feelings and mute negative ones; or that one should try to remain calm, cool, and collected in all settings. In Scale #2, participants were given a list of the basic 15 emotions (Sprecher, 1985).

Here are some more beliefs people have as to how one should deal with strong emotions in intimate relationships. We have listed 15 emotions. With each emotion are three statements. Please choose the one with which you most agree.

Again, the three statements were carefully constructed truisms. The first truism urged people to exaggerate their feelings. The second advised honest expression. The third warned them to play down their feelings. Here is an example:

Anger:

____ Exaggerate your anger or be pushed around.

____ Meet anger face to face.

____ A soft answer turneth away wrath.

Participants received a +1 each time they assumed one ought to exaggerate an emotion, a 0 each time they assumed one ought to be honest, and a -1 each time they assumed one ought to play down emotions. Thus, the higher the score, the more people were assuming that one ought to play up versus minimize feelings. Possible scores ranged from 15 to -15. A 0 indicates that the person favors complete honesty.

3. *Emotions Experienced in Close Relationships.*

Participants were asked: "During the past month, how often (if at all) have you experienced the following emotions in your love relationship?" Then followed the basic emotions—anger, anxiety, depression, fear, frustration, grief, guilt/shame, hate, hurt, jealousy, joy, loneliness, love, resentment, and sexual excitement. Possible answers ranged from (1) "Never" to (9) "Extremely often."

4. *Emotions Expressed in Close Relationships*

The next scale was designed to assess how often participants expressed each of the 15 basic emotions in their close relationships. Participants were told: "What we feel and what we show may be two different things. During the past month, how often have you actually expressed the following emotions in your closest love relationship? Then followed a list of the 15 basic emotions. Participants were asked to indicate their reactions on the same scale they used in the previous section.

a. *Assessing Differences Between Emotions Experienced versus Expressed*

People can try to manage their emotions in two different ways. Firstly, they can pretend to feel what they don't feel . . . or deny feeling what they do feel. (Such strategies should be revealed in reports of the *frequency* with which various emotions are felt *versus* expressed.) Or, people can manage things a bit more subtly—they can give their partner a hint as to what they feel but tone down their emotional expression. (Such strategies should be revealed in reports of the *intensity* with which various emotions are felt versus expressed.)

(1) *Frequency of Emotions Felt versus Shown.* In Section 1 of the questionnaire, men and women were asked to indicate how often during the past month they had felt versus expressed 15 different emotions. The next step was to calculate a trio of difference scores: (1) How often positive emotions were felt versus expressed. (2) How often negative emotions were felt versus expressed. (3) How often all emotions were felt versus expressed.

(2) *Intensity of Emotions Felt versus Expressed.*

In Section II of the questionnaire, men and women were told:

It is difficult to decide just how honest to be in close relationships. Sometimes we want to let our partners know exactly how we feel and find out just how they feel. At other times, we decide honesty should be tempered by practicality.

Consider the following list of emotions. Think, for a moment, about the very last time you felt each of these feelings for your date or mate. How did you react?

- Did you exaggerate your feelings? (Did you reassure him/her of your love, when you really did not feel very loving? Or did you pretend to be angry to get what you wanted?)
- Were you completely honest?
- Did you play down your feelings? (Were you too shy to express your love? Did you insist you were not so mad as you really were?)

Participants were asked to recall the last time they had felt each of the basic 15 emotions and asked to indicate how they had acted on a scale that ranged from (4) "Greatly exaggerated how intensely I felt," through (0) "Was totally honest," to (-4) "Completely hid my feelings."

5. Relationship Satisfaction

How well the various strategies for dealing with emotion worked in close relationships was assessed via a straightforward question: "How satisfying is your current relationship? Possible answers ranged from (1) "Not at all satisfying," to (9) "Extremely satisfying,"

Results

A. Gender Differences

Let us begin by examining the impact of gender on ideology and emotional experience and expression. (These results are relatively straightforward.)

1. Ideology

Hypothesis 5 proposed that men and women, from a variety of cultures, should differ in how they think people *ought* to deal with strong emotions in close relationships. The data provide strong support for this hypothesis. (In fact, as we shall soon see, gender seemed to have a greater impact than ethnicity on ideology.)

Women tended to believe that it is best to express one's feelings honestly. Men were more likely to believe that it is best to manage one's feelings. Scale #1 assessed the extent to which people advocated emotional honesty versus management of feelings in close relationships. In Table 1 we see that women were more likely to believe that "honesty is the best policy" than were men. ($F = 30.22$, 4 and 370 df. $p = .001$). Scale #2 was designed to assess whether people believed that intimates should exaggerate, honestly express, or play down their strong emotions. From Table 2 it is evident that both men and women agreed that one should "tell it like it is" when feelings are positive ($F = .06$, n.s.). When feelings are negative, however, although both men and women agreed that people should probably shade things a bit, men were more likely to stress the importance of emotional control than were women ($F = 11.93$. $p = .001$.)

Table 1. Ideology: The Extent to Which Ideology Supports Honest Expression versus Management

Gender		**How Honest? [1]**
Men		9.71
Women		17.27
Ethnic Group		
European		18.02
Chinese		11.39
Filipino		12.20
Hawaiian		14.53
Japanese		13.78
Analysis of Variance	**d.f.**	
Main Effect Gender	1	30.22*
Main Effect Ethnic Group	4	3.60**
Interaction	4	.85
Total	370	

1. The higher the number, the more the group's ideology stresses honesty.
*p<0.001. **p<0.01

Table 2. Ideology: The Extent to Which Ideology Supports Exaggeration, Honest Expression or Playing Down of Emotions [1]

	Positive Emotions	**Negative Emotions**	**All Emotions**
Gender			
Men	.02	-1.30	-1.28
Women	.02	-.47	-.46
Ethnic Group			
European	.21	-.78	-.57
Chinese	.07	-1.32	-1.25
Filipino	-.09	-.17	-.25
Hawaiian	-.04	-.58	-.63
Japanese	-.11	-.78	-.89
Analysis of Variance **d.f.**			
Main Effect Gender 1	.06	11.93*	9.43**
Main Effect Ethnic 4	2.44***	1.06	.62
Interaction 4	.78	3.44**	3.22**
Total 332			

1. The higher the number, the more the group's ideology supports exaggeration. 0 = Total honesty. *p<.001; **p<.01; ***p<.05

2. Gender Differences in Emotional Experience versus Expression

Hypothesis 6 proposed that men and women will differ in the emotions—positive and negative—that they experience and express in their close relationships. As we can see from Table 3A, men and women did not seem to differ in how emotionally they felt about their close relationships. Both men and women felt positive and negative emotions equally often (Fs = 1.47 and .00, respectively.)

Tables 3B and 3C indicate that men and women did differ in how willing they were to express these strong feelings—positive and negative—to their mates, however. Women expressed their emotions, positive and negative, more frequently than did men (Fs = 7.05, p = .01 and 4.41, p = .01).

We secure identical results when we ask men and women whether they exaggerated their feelings, expressed them honestly, or minimized their expression (see Table 4). Both men and women expressed positive emotions with equal intensity (F = 1.59); men tried to tone down the expression of their negative emotions, however (F = 3.47, p = .06).

Table 3. Ethnic and Gender Differences in *Frequency* of Emotional Experience/Expression

A. Emotions Felt [1]

Gender	**Positive Emotions**	**Negative Emotions**	**All Emotions**
Men	7.14	3.77	4.46
Women	7.33	3.78	4.49
Ethnic Group			
Europeans	7.29	3.51	4.27
Chinese	6.97	3.95	4.55
Filipinos	7.16	4.24	4.83
Hawaiians	7.49	4.01	4.71
Japanese	7.35	3.73	4.46
Analysis of Variance	**d.f.**		
Main Effect Gender	1.47	.00	.05
(1)			
Main Effect Ethnic	.72	2.86***	2.77***
(4)			
Interaction	.30	.29	.35
(4)			
Total (373)			

Table 3. Ethnic and Gender Differences in *Frequency* of Emotional Experience/Expression (Cont.)

B. Emotions Shown [1]

Gender	**Positive Emotions**	**Negative Emotions**	**All Emotions**
Men	6.76	3.11	3.86
Women	7.25	3.45	4.22
Ethnic Group			
Europeans	7.16	2.99	3.83
Chinese	6.70	3.75	4.34
Filipinos	7.23	3.94	4.63
Hawaiians	7.46	3.59	4.39
Japanese	6.96	3.25	3.99
Analysis of Variance	**d.f.**		
Main Effect Gender			
(1)	7.05**	4.41**	6.25**
Main Effect Ethnic			
(4)	1.05	5.77*	5.43*
Interaction			
(4)	.54	.47	.39
Total (373)			

C. Difference Between Emotions Felt/Shown [2]

Gender	**Positive Emotions**	**Negative Emotions**	**All Emotions**
Men	-.39	-.66	-.59
Women	-.08	-.33	-.28
Ethnic Group			
Europeans	-.12	-.52	-.44
Chinese	-.27	-.20	-.22
Filipinos	.01	-.30	-.20
Hawaiians	-.03	-.42	-.33
Japanese	-.39	-.48	-.46
Analysis of Variance	**d.f.**		
Main Effect Gender			
(1)	5.42***	4.84***	6.48**
Main Effect Ethnic			
(4)	2.02	.59	.81
Interaction			
(4)	.75	.66	.83
Total (373)			

1. The higher the number, the more *often* an emotion is felt or shown.
2. A positive number indicates that participants are exaggerating their feelings. A 0 = Honest expression. A negative number indicates that participants are minimizing their feelings.

*p<.001; **p<.01; ***p<.05

Table 4. Ethnic and Gender Differences in *Intensity* of Emotional Experience/Expression [1]

Gender	**Positive Emotions**	**Negative Emotions**	**All Emotions**
Men	.02	-1.06	-.85
Women	.16	-.84	-.63
Ethnic Group			
Europeans	.05	-1.05	-.83
Chinese	.28	-.69	-.51
Filipinos	.11	-.64	-.49
Hawaiians	.59	-.93	-.61
Japanese	.05	-.96	-.75
Analysis of Variance d.f.			
Main Effect Gender (1)	1.59	3.47 (p = .06)	4.62*
Main Effect Ethnic (4)	1.50	2.15 (p = .07)	2.07
Interaction (4)	.25	1.42	1.21
Total (369)			

1. A positive number indicates that participants are exaggerating their feelings. A 0 = Honest expression. A negative number indicates that participants are minimizing their feelings.
*p<.05

B. Ethnic Group Differences

The impact of ethnic group on ideology and on emotional experience and expression is much more difficult to summarize.

1. Ideology

Hypothesis 1 proposed that members of the various ethnic groups would differ in their belief as to how one ought to deal with strong emotions in intimate encounters. The data suggest that people of European, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, and Japanese ancestry

do possess different ideologies as to how people ought to deal with strong emotions in intimate relationships.

Scale #1 asked people whether they believed men and women ought to express their feelings honestly or manage their strong emotions. In Table 1, we see that ethnic groups did differ in how convinced they were that "honesty is the best policy" in close relationships. Europeans seemed to be the most enthusiastic advocates of direct, honest expression; the Chinese seemed to be the most convinced that people do best if they manage their emotions ($F = 3.60$, 4 and 370 d.f., $p = .05$)

Scale #2 asked members of the various ethnic groups more specific questions: should one exaggerate, honestly express, or play down positive and negative emotions? When we move to a sharper focus, a somewhat different picture emerges (see Table 2). Now we see that it is the Europeans who believe that one should play up or exaggerate positive feelings ($F = 2.44$, 4 and 332 d.f., $p = .05$). All ethnic groups were convinced, and equally convinced, that people ought to minimize the expression of negative emotions in close relationships ($F = 1.06$, n.s.)

2. Ethnic Differences in Emotional Experience versus Expression

Let us now examine, not how members of various ethnic groups think they ought to behave, but how they actually do feel and behave (See Tables 3-5). Hypotheses 2 and 3 proposed that members of the various ethnic groups should vary little in the emotions they feel in their close relationships; they should differ far more in how they express their emotions, however.

Let us begin by focusing on the positive emotions. In Tables 3A and 3B, we see that—when asked how often they felt a variety of emotions during the last month—members of the various groups' reports were very similar (See Table 3A). Members of the various groups were also equally likely to express these positive feelings (See Table 3B). Members of almost all the ethnic groups reported that they experienced positive feelings for their mates slightly more often than they actually expressed them (See Table 3C). (Again, there were no ethnic differences in how often positive emotions were felt versus shown ($F = 2.02$, n.s.). It is hard to know just why people did not always express their positive

feelings for their mates. Perhaps dating couples felt shy about expressing their joy, love, or sexual interest in the other. Perhaps married couples simply took each other for granted. But perhaps people simply forgot how often they shared their positive feelings with their mates. For we see that, in Table 4, when people were asked how intensely they responded *the last time* they felt a positive emotion, most people reported that they either "accentuated the positive" or expressed their feelings honestly. (Again, there were no ethnic differences in how people responded; F = 1.50, n.s.)

Let us now examine how ethnic group members responded when their feelings were more negative. In Table 3A, we see that men and women in the various ethnic groups did differ in how often they experienced negative emotions in their love relationships during a given month. The Japanese were more likely than members of other groups to report feeling negative emotions in their love relationships; the Europeans were least likely to report such emotions (see Table 3A). Groups also differed in how frequently they reported their negative feelings to their mates. This time it was the Filipinos who were most likely to reveal negative feelings; Europeans were least likely to report such emotions (see Table 3B).

In Table 3C, we see that members of all the ethnic groups tended to experience negative feelings more often than they expressed them. Ethnic group members did not differ in how often they experienced versus expressed negative feelings, however (see Table 3C, F = .59, n.s.) The ethnic group members were also equally likely to try to hide the intensity of their negative feelings (see Table 4, F = 2.15, n.s.)

3. Relationship Satisfaction

Hypothesis 4 proposed that existing differences in the way ethnic group members deal with emotions should have little impact on relationship satisfaction. It does appear as if members of the various ethnic groups were equally satisfied with their relationships (F = .80, 4 and 361 d.f.)

Discussion

Many cultural and evolutionary researchers have argued that gender is important in determining emotional experience and expression. In a variety of nations, researchers have argued that women tend to be more "relational" than are men (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Josephs, Markus, & Tafarrodi, 1992). According to evolutionary theory, gender differences are embedded in the architecture of the brain. These differences evolved as a consequence of differences in how much time and effort men and women must expend to raise progeny and from the division of labor existing (of necessity) in ancestral hunting-gathering societies. Traditionally, women were expected to take care of offspring and nurture the family, while men were responsible for providing meat via hunting big game. Thus, the argument goes, women were taught to affiliate with and to nurture others, while men were taught to be skilled at hunting and protecting the community in tribal wars. These kinds of skills to not necessarily promote close emotional ties with others. Or so the theory goes. Some theorists, taking a sociocultural perspective, argue that these pervasive gender differences are a consequence of fact that in most societies of the world, men and women are socialized very differently and taught very different skills (Eagly, 1987). Cross and Madson (1997), for example, argued that—given differences in socialization—gender differences should be more pronounced in traditional Asian, collectivist cultures than in modern European individualistic cultures.

Whatever the cause, in this study we did find that gender differences were important in a variety of cultures and ethnic groups. The preceding data suggest that gender was even more important than ethnicity in shaping people's emotional ideology, emotional experience, and habits of emotional expression.

Women of many cultures seemed more convinced that direct, honest, communication works best. Men tended to be persuaded that somewhat more emotional management is necessary. Men and women may share roughly the same sorts of emotional experiences in their relationships, but they differed in how freely they express their feelings. Men tended to express their positive and negative emotions less frequently and less intensely than they

were experienced. Women tended to be somewhat more direct in their emotional expression.

It is less clear how ethnic groups differ from one another in emotional ideology, experience, and expression. Members of the various ethnic groups do appear to possess somewhat different ideologies as to how men and women should behave in close relationships. European men and women, for example, seemed pulled in two different directions. On one hand, they were strong advocates for the philosophy that one ought to "accentuate the positive" in order to make relationships work. Europeans were more likely than members of other groups to think that intimates ought to express at least as much love, joy, or sexual interest as one is feeling. Ethnic groups did not differ in how they thought people ought to deal with negative emotions, however. Everyone believed that people ought to refrain from expressing negative emotions.

On the other hand, Europeans were more likely than members of other ethnic groups to believe in total honesty in close relationships. (This dual philosophy reminds one of the perplexing instructions generally given to contestants in beauty pageants: "Always smile," and "Be yourself.") One might expect that in the end, some combination of tact and honesty—a sort of blending of the various ethnic group philosophies—may become the universal ideal.

Some historians have argued that the American concern with clear, direct, and honest expression arouse out of necessity. America has long been a "melting pot." In 1970, for example, the U. S. Census reported that there were only 500,000 men and women of multiracial heritage living in the U.S.; by 2000, the number had swelled to more than six million (Jones & Symens Smith, 2001).

This cultural mixing is likely to increase. In Hawaii, during the last 10 years, for example, 70% of the marriages have been inter-ethnic (see Lee & Bean, 2004; Rapson, 1980 and 2007). Globalization and rapid developments in communication and transportation ensure that cultural contacts will continue to increase. Such cultural pluralism may force members of all ethnic groups to be more direct in their communication. When two people come from the same culture, communication can be subtle, indirect, non-verbal, and ritualized. Couples can read one another's glances, fill in the silences. When intimates come from very different cultures, however, such

communication begins to falter. Couples must begin to explain themselves. It is possible, then, that in the future the various ethnic groups will become more similar in their belief in open communication, tempered with tact.

The research has also documented the fact that the various ethnic groups differ marginally in the emotions they experience and express in their close relationships. The fact that the various ethnic groups differ in the way they deal with emotions, however, does not seem to effect relationship satisfaction.

This study provides some encouragement to social psychologists who wish to explore gender and ethnic differences in emotional experience and expression. This single study is not without serious flaws, of course. In subsequent research, social psychologists will surely want to explore not just what people claim they feel, but to see what more objective evidence suggests they are indeed feeling. Such measures include electromyographic measures of facial expression, measures such as the FACS Dor FAST indicators (Hager & Ekman, 1983), fMRI readings and chemical assays, and measures of heart rate, respiration, and skin conductance. Researchers will want to observe real behavior via tape recording and videotapes. Such ambitious projects must, however, await the future.

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